

CELEBRATING CHIEF TINA R. WATKINS OF THE PETERSBURG DEPARTMENT OF FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

HON. A. DONALD McEACHIN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 17, 2022

Mr. McEACHIN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to celebrate the hiring of Chief Tina R. Watkins, who is the first female, and first African-American fire chief of Petersburg Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services in its nearly 250-year history. Chief Watkins brings years of experience in fire administration and field operations and is primed to succeed in this role.

Born in Richmond, Virginia, Chief Watkins grew up in a middle-class family where she was raised by hard working parents. Her mother was an educator, and father was a postal worker and Korean War veteran. They encouraged Chief Watkins and her three brothers to go out and experience their dreams. Inspired by her parents, Chief Watkins chose a path of service in her own life.

Chief Watkins holds impressive educational credentials. She earned a Master's degree in Leadership with an emphasis in Emergency Management and Executive Fire Leadership, along with a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Safety and Business Administration. She holds many professional certifications through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Fire Academy, and the Virginia State Fire Program, including those in fire prevention, hazardous materials, national fire services staff and command, and emergency planning and effective communications. This education has served Chief Watkins throughout her career, and will surely continue to inform her work in Petersburg.

Chief Watkins has proven her dedication to service and her community. After graduation she served our nation as a member of the United States Coast Guard. Following her Coast Guard service, Chief Watkins began her fire service career in 1988 when she was recruited and hired by the Richmond Fire and Emergency Services as a fire fighter. She was promoted through the ranks to become Richmond Fire and Emergency Services first female lieutenant, captain, and chief officer. She spent 11 years as a Battalion Chief for Richmond Fire and Emergency Services where she supervised five stations and six fire companies. Chief Watkins has a demonstrated track record serving in leadership roles with Richmond Fire and Emergency Services, leaving a legacy of improving processes and policies, making the department more efficient.

Now Chief Watkins has the distinction of not only becoming Petersburg's first African American Fire Chief, but also first woman to lead a fire department in the Commonwealth. I am confident that under her leadership the Petersburg Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services will continue to provide exceptional service to our community.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Chief Tina R. Watkins for her service to her Nation, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and her community.

IN RECOGNITION OF GRAND PARKLET

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 17, 2022

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, today I would like to recognize the hard work and vision of Detroit's Grandmont Rosedale community and organizations who have made the dedication and grand opening of Grand Parklet possible.

Grand Parklet is the culmination of a transformative public roads project that created a community green space from what was once a vacant corner. But this park is not a typical beautification project. Grand Parklet creates a walkable route that connects residents to neighborhoods and local businesses, a welcome addition to this thriving neighborhood. Beyond connecting the community, Grand Parklet will serve as a space to gather for events and conversation for all to enjoy.

Please join me in thankful recognition of Grandmont Rosedale Community Development Corporation and the people of Rosedale Park, North Rosedale Park, Minock Park, Grandmont, and Grandmont 1 who made Grand Parklet possible.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MARK W. HEMENWAY

HON. JERRY McNERNEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 17, 2022

Mr. McNERNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and work of Mark W. Hemenway, who passed away on May 8, 2022.

Mark graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York in 1973. He was intensely focused on his studies and training, while also maintaining perspective and serving as a steady, positive influence on his classmates. He worked his way through a challenging system with confidence and calmness, never losing sight of his priorities. His commitment to academic excellence was apparent to all, and he graduated 61st in a class of over 950 cadets.

Mark received a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers upon his graduation and spent seven years as an active-duty service member. After leaving the Army in 1980, Mark worked for a large manufacturing company before joining a consulting firm outside Boston, Massachusetts, conducting logistics, manpower, and training analysis for the U.S. Department of Defense.

Later in life, Mark felt called to enter Seminary and obtain a Master of Divinity degree. He and his wife, Kate, met as volunteers while doing street ministry in Boston Common, and in subsequent decades, Mark worked as a volunteer with those most in need at state prisons, county correctional facilities, homeless shelters, and other institutions in the Lowell, Massachusetts area. His contributions will long be remembered by his brothers and sisters at the Salvation Army Lowell Corps Community Center, and by the many people he served throughout the community.

Mark's legacy is best encapsulated by a passage from the United States Military Academy Alma Mater, which reads: "And when our work is done, our course on earth is run, may it be said, 'well done.' Be thou at peace."

HONORING MELVIN MILES, JR.

HON. KWEISI MFUME

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 17, 2022

Mr. MFUME. Madam Speaker, music is not just a passion, but a life's calling for some. Mr. Melvin Miles, Jr. is without question a man who has walked this life listening to and answering the call of the art of music. From his matriculation at Morgan State University in the early 1970s, Melvin Miles, Jr. was fascinated by all kinds of music and musicians. Over the span of the better part of five decades, Mr. Miles has been recognized by many as an exceptional cornetist, trumpeter, and band leader.

Since 1973, Melvin has honed his unmatched musical admiration and talent to serve as a faculty member at Morgan State University where he has taught and mentored students and marching bands alike. In this chapter of his life, he has committed himself to the mission of leading young people on the path to higher learning and mastering an instrument with purpose.

Madame Speaker, I am pleased today to enter into the RECORD my recognition for a musician, friend, and teacher extraordinaire, Melvin Miles, Jr., who is retiring from Morgan State University in Baltimore.

Melvin first attended Frederick Douglass High School before entering Morgan State University and receiving Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts degrees in Music Education. He then furthered his art by attending The Catholic University of America for doctoral studies, again in Music Education. While these institutions and college experiences fine-tuned his technique and craft, they also taught him that nothing compared to music in terms of uniting a university.

Upon starting with Morgan State's faculty, Mr. Miles made sure to make music a part of every student's college experience. The Symphonic Winds, Jazz Ensemble, and the Concert Band brought endless hours of joy to students, alumni, and attendees of all walks of life.

As a teacher, Melvin has been known to demand excellence from those he mentored. Still, he maintained a sense of humor that made it nearly impossible to not smile when you were around him. Melvin Miles' blend of serious and lighthearted mentorship was a winning formula that carried his marching bands to the highest of heights. This included him guiding his 2019 marching band through the immense pressure of performing in the renowned Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York. Even with the many eyes and ears that have been fixed on his bands over the span of his career, Melvin has never diverged from the down-to-earth man he is. Ultimately, it is his purely genuine persona paired with his accolades that has caused Melvin's unmistakable popularity to endure.

Melvin's love for music, Morgan State, and Maryland is truly unmatched. I thank Melvin

for his friendship and leadership over all these many years and thank him as well for all the memories he has given to the university, the Historically Black College or University community, and the thousands of alumni who will miss him dearly. I have been lucky enough to personally call Melvin a friend for the past forty-two years. On behalf of all who know him or have heard his sound, we are all grateful that Melvin has given the world his song.